

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 11, 14-18, and 130-148 were previously pending in this application. Claims 141-144 have been cancelled without prejudice. No claims have been amended or added. As a result, claims 1-9, 11, 14-18, 130-140, and 145-148 are now pending for examination, with claims 14, 130, 131, 138, 147, and 148 being independent claims. No new matter has been added.

The Office Action indicates that claims 1-9, 11, 14-18, 130-140, and 145-148 recite allowable subject matter. The Patent Office has rejected claims 141-144 for reasons stated in the Office Action. While the Applicants do not concede the merits of any of the rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Office Action, the Applicants have elected to cancel the rejected claims solely for the purpose of expediting the patent application process.

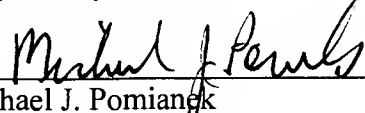
CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the Undersigned at the telephone number listed below if this communication does not place the case in condition for allowance.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Dated: September 22, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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